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E.O. 12958: DECL: 2020/02/18  
TAGS: [PARM](#) [KACT](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [RS](#) [US](#)  
SUBJECT: SFO-GVA-VIII: (U) REQUEST FOR GUIDANCE-004, MOBILE ICBM BASE  
AND BASING AREA SIZE LIMITATIONS AND PROVISION OF BOUNDARY  
COORDINATES

REF: STATE 009672 (SFO-VIII GUIDANCE 002)  
10 GENEVA 97 (SFO-GVA-VIII-021)

CLASSIFIED BY: Rose A. Gottemoeller, Assistant Secretary, Department  
of State, VCI; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

[1](#)1. (U) This is SFO-GVA-VIII-066.

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SUMMARY AND GUIDANCE REQUESTED  
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[1](#)2. (S) In Ref A, paragraph 11, Washington instructed the delegation to secure Russian agreement to four provisions related to mobile ICBMs and their bases. The Russians have agreed to three of the four provisions: 48-hour advance notice of the exit of a solid-fueled missile from its production facility; the right to decline at the point of entry to conduct an inspection of a mobile ICBM base if 50 percent of the missiles are not present at a designated inspection site; and the placement of unique identifiers (UIDs) on ICBMs, SLBMs and deployed heavy bombers. The final provision specified in Ref A, paragraph 11, sought to limit the size of each mobile ICBM base and the individual basing areas associated with such bases. The Russian delegation has rejected these limitations while steadfastly arguing these limitations are unacceptable since there are no equivalent limitations on U.S. bases for strategic offensive arms. The Russians assert this restriction is uniquely designed to limit their mobile ICBMs.

¶3. (S) Delegation now believes that U.S. negotiation objectives would be best served by dropping our insistence on establishing limits on the size of either the mobile ICBM base or the basing areas for mobile ICBMs on such bases, in light of the limited utility of such limitations (see analysis in paragraph 9, below).

¶4. (S) Delegation requests a change in the guidance contained in Ref A, paragraph 11, in order to drop the requirement to seek Russian agreement to limit the size of the mobile ICBM base, which includes the very large area in which mobile ICBMs would be located when deployed to the field (125,000 km<sup>2</sup>) and on the much smaller basing areas (5 km<sup>2</sup>) within these bases where the mobile ICBMs are normally located inside of individual fixed structures.

¶5. (U) Background is provided in paragraphs 6-7, analysis is provided in paragraphs 8-10. Recommendation is in paragraph 11. Guidance requested is in paragraph 12.

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#### BACKGROUND

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¶6. (S) The U.S. delegation has vigorously pursued Russian agreement to limitations on the size of mobile ICBM bases and the basing areas of such bases per Ref A instruction. The Russian side has refused to discuss such area limitations on the grounds that they will only affect one Party and that they uniquely target Russia's mobile ICBMs. The Russian side has routinely noted that the U.S. side would not accept analogous area restrictions on the deployment areas for its SSBNs at sea.

¶7. (S) In an attempt to accomplish the same area description in a different way, the delegation informally discussed with the Russian delegation, the possibility of replacing the proposed limits on the size of mobile ICBMs bases and basing areas for mobile ICBMs with a provision that would provide a series of geographic coordinates to define the boundary of each mobile ICBM base in the START Follow-on database (Ref B). The Russian delegation rejected this approach as simply another means to restrict the Russian mobile ICBM force.

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#### ANALYSIS

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¶8. (S) The delegation expects to face continuing deadlock on the proposed size limitation for mobile ICBM bases and their associated basing areas; thus, the delegation will be unable to execute the guidance in paragraph 11 of Ref A.

¶9. (S) The delegation believes it is unlikely that Russia would increase the size of the basing area on its mobile ICBM bases or operate outside the area encompassed by the 125,000 km<sup>2</sup> deployment area stipulated in START, even if there were no area limitations. The size of the relatively small basing areas is limited under current Russian practice to maximize security for the single mobile ICBM regiment (each with 9 mobile ICBMs and their TELs) assigned to

each basing area. The basing areas are normally surrounded by multiple fences and cleared areas to maintain a secure perimeter; to increase the size of these areas would require significant additional investment and security efforts. Regarding the size of the larger ICBM base itself, which includes the contiguous deployment area for the deployed mobile ICBMs assigned to the base, members of the Russian delegation have asserted their deployed road-mobile ICBM launchers will not deploy in the field at great distances from the small basing areas because they have a 500 km maximum operating range. Moreover, they have argued that the deployed mobile ICBM launchers require a large supporting group of vehicles and personnel that would be detectable by U.S. national technical means. U.S. observation of Russian operational practices has been consistent with these assertions, although some would attribute these practices to past START restrictions.

¶10. (S) Given these operational realities, delegation believes at this point it would be counterproductive to further delay completion of the treaty in pursuit of size restrictions on the mobile ICBM base and its basing areas.

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RECOMMENDATION  
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¶11. (S) Delegation recommends dropping the requirement in Ref A, paragraph 11, to seek Russian agreement on a provision that the size of mobile ICBM bases will not exceed 125,000 km<sup>2</sup> and that the basing areas for mobile ICBMs will not exceed 5 km<sup>2</sup>. The delegation further recommends deleting proposed Treaty Article VI which contains a variety of limits on mobile ICBMs based on satisfactory completion of the other three provisions outlined in Ref A, paragraph 11.

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GUIDANCE REQUESTED  
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¶12. (S) Delegation requests a change in the guidance contained in Ref A, paragraph 11, by dropping the provision that mobile ICBM bases not exceed 125,000 km<sup>2</sup> in area or that their basing areas not exceed 5 km<sup>2</sup>.

¶13. (U) Gottemoeller sends.  
GRIFFITHS